

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SAA-01 PM-05 HA-05 L-03
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 MCE-00 TRSE-00 ACDA-12
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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:JWTTWINAM:SLB
APPROVED BY P - MR. NEWSOM
T:LBROWN
DOD/ISA:RMURRAY
DOD/DSAA:RVIOLETTE
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NEA:HSAUNDERS

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O 162325Z AUG 78 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA NIACT IMMEDIATE
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SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0000
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 208508

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, YE, SA, US

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR YAR: RESPONSE TO SULTAN
RE YARG REQUESTS

REF: (A) SANA 3926; (B) USDAO JIDDA DTG 121907 Z AUG 78;
(C) SANA 3986; (D) JIDDA 5939; (E) JIDDA 5988;
(F) SANA 4053; (G) SANA 4054

1. WE HAVE READ WITH GREAT INTEREST COMMENTS OF
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ADDRESSEES IN WAKE OF AUGUST 10 MEETINGS IN SANA. WE
BELIEVE THE WAY WE RESPOND TO PRINCE SULTAN'S REQUEST
FOR US VIEWS ON WHERE WE GO FROM HERE WILL BE PARTICULARLY
IMPORTANT IN MAINTAINING THE PROPER NUANCE IN THE US/SAUDI
COOPERATION IN SUPPORT OF YAR MILITARY AND IN REESTABLISH-
ING AN APPROPRIATE TONE IN OUR JOINT DEALINGS WITH YARG.
WE THEREFORE REQUEST AMBASSADOR WEST ORCHESTRATE THE
RESPONSE WHICH SULTAN HAS ASKED FROM GENERAL CATHEY.

2. FROM WASHINGTON PERSPECTIVE IT SEEMS THAT THE

ESSENTIAL POINTS WE WANT TO GET ACROSS TO SULTAN, AND PERHAPS THROUGH HIM TO YAR PRESIDENT SALIH, ARE THE FOLLOWING:

--WE APPRECIATE THE INTENSE POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL

PRESSURES UNDER WHICH YAR LEADERSHIP IS WORKING AND THEREFORE CAN UNDERSTAND PRESIDENT SALIH'S DESIRE TO SEE A MASSIVE INFLUX OF US/SAUDI MILITARY ASSISTANCE AS AN IMMEDIATE POLITICAL AND SECURITY PROP. IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE ROLE WE HAVE DETERMINED TO PLAY VIS-A-VIS SAG IN OUR JOINT UNDERTAKING IN NORTH YEMEN, WE NEED SAUDI ADVICE AND HELP IN MAKING YAR LEADERSHIP UNDERSTAND THE FOLLOWING:

--THAT US POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR YAR IS REAL AND MEANINGFUL, THAT OUR PROPOSALS TO ASSIST IN MILITARY MODERNIZATION OF YAR ARMED FORCES ARE IN OUR VIEW DESIGNED TO HAVE AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT IN MANIFESTING THIS US POLITICAL SUPPORT, AND THAT OUR LONG TERM OBJECTIVE IS TO WORK CLOSELY WITH SAUDIS AND YAR IN BUILDING ON A SOUND BASIS AN APPROPRIATE, EFFECTIVE DEFENSE CAPABILITY IN YEMEN.

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--WE CONTINUE TO THINK THAT PHASED PROPOSAL WHICH WE AND SAUDIS ATTEMPTED TO MAKE JOINTLY TO PRESIDENT SALIH IS THE WAY TO PROCEED IN THIS TRILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. WE BELIEVE THAT FUTURE SAG-USG CONTACTS WITH YARG SHOULD EMPHASIZE THAT THE USG WILL BE PROVIDING THE ACTUAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY AND US PERSONNEL WILL BE ON THE SCENE TO PROVIDE NECESSARY ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING. ABSORBABILITY WILL PLAY A LARGE ROLE IN DETERMINING REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT.

--WE HAVE STUDIED THE LIST OF EQUIPMENT WHICH YARG HAS REQUESTED AS A COUNTER-PROPOSAL (REF E). WHILE WE CONSIDER IT AN INTERESTING INDICATION OF LONG TERM YARG ASPIRATIONS IN DEVELOPING A MODERN DEFENSE FORCE WE ARE NOT PREPARED AT THIS TIME TO CONSIDER IT AS A FORMAL REQUEST FOR US EQUIPMENT AND HENCE WITH SAUDI HELP WE NEED TO FIND A WAY TO AVOID RESPONDING TO IT DIRECTLY.

--REDEYE IS NOT IN PRODUCTION AND NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

--OTHER ITEMS (REF E), WHILE WE MIGHT IN TIME FIND THEM TO BE APPROPRIATE IN TYPE TO MEETING LONG TERM YAR DEFENSE NEEDS, RAISE SERIOUS US POLICY PROBLEMS OF APPROPRIATENESS OF QUANTITIES, COST EFFECTIVENESS AND ABILITY OF YAR DEFENSE FORCES TO EFFECTIVELY ABSORB THEM. WE NEED TO FIND SOME WAY TO GET ACROSS TO PRESIDENT SALIH OUR CONVICTION THAT YAR MILITARY, IF IT IS TO BE EFFECTIVE

MUST ENTER A GRADUAL BUILDING PROCESS LEARNING FIRST TO
USE AND MAINTAIN RELATIVELY MODEST AMOUNTS OF APPROPRIATE

EQUIPMENT.

--WITH RESPECT TO THE SIX SPECIFIC ITEMS SULTAN HAS
RAISED (REF B):

(A) GUIDANCE ON APPROXIMATELY 12 F-53'S IS CONTAINED PARA
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63 STATE 189537.

(B) GUIDANCE ON TRANSFER OF 12 HELICOPTERS AS WELL AS
F-5B'S CONTAINED IN PARA 6C OF SAME TELEGRAM.

(C) SAUDI PROVISION OF OERLIKON GUNS APPEARS TO US A
SENSIBLE PROPOSITION, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD INTRODUCE AN
ADDITIONAL WEAPONS SYSTEM ESSENTIALLY REDUNDANT TO THE
VULCAN. AS NON-US EQUIPMENT WE WOULD NOT BE DIRECTLY
INVOLVED IN PURCHASE AND BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT COMMENT
ONE WAY OR THE OTHER ON ITS APPROPRIATENESS.

(D) US PROVISION OF TANKS, APC'S AND C-130'S TO YAR ARE
QUESTIONS WE ARE PREPARED TO LOOK AT OVER TIME AS WE
CONTINUE TO ASSESS THE MILITARY THREAT TO NORTH YEMEN
AND AS WE SEE WHAT PROGRESS YAR ARMED FORCES MAKE IN
ABSORBING EQUIPMENT PRESENTLY PROPOSED. SAG SHOULD BE
AWARE, HOWEVER, THAT LEAD TIME ON M 60'S AND M 113 CAN BE
UP TO 30 MONTHS, IN ADDITION TO LOA PROCESSING TIME OF
UP TO SIX MONTHS THEREBY SUBSTANTIALLY DIMINISHING IMPACT
OF THESE ON YAR MILITARY CAPABILITY. SAG MAY THEREFORE
WISH TO CONSIDER AS ALTERNATIVES FRENCH-ORIGIN
AMX-30'S AND AMX-10'S.

--ON THE QUESTION OF FUNDING THESE OR OTHER EQUIPMENT
REQUESTS WE ARE NOT AT PRESENT IN A POSITION TO GIVE
ANY HOPE TO SAG (OR YARG) THAT USG WILL BE ABLE AT ANY
POINT TO MAKE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS. ANY POSSIBLE
US FUNDING OF EQUIPMENT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. (FYI:
REALISTICALLY THIS WOULD ONLY BE POSSIBLE IN THE FORM
OF FMS CREDITS IN FY 80 OR BEYOND. AS EMBASSY AWARE,
STATUTE AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY HAVE MANDATED PHASE-
OUT OF MAP IN FY 81. GIVEN THE YAR'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE
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RESERVES AND DEBT SERVICE RATIO, MAP, EVEN IF AVAILABLE,
WOULD NOT BE APPROVED FOR THE YAR. END FYI.) SEE
STATE 198372, PARA 5.

--ONE ISSUE WHICH WE MUST RESOLVE IMMEDIATELY IS WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH THE SUBSTANTIAL EFFORT REQUIRED TO MAKE CERTAIN ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT IN THE PROPOSED PACKAGE AVAILABLE IN TIME FOR NATIONAL DAY PARADE. TIME IS RAPIDLY ERRODING OUR ABILITY TO MEET DELIVERIES BY PARADE DATE. USG IS FULLY PREPARED TO PROCEED WITH

THAT EFFORT. IN VIEW OF THE SUBSTANTIAL COST AND EFFORT INVOLVED TO BOTH US AND SAG IF YARG DOES NOT HOWEVER ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO US-SAG ROLE IN PROVIDING EQUIPMENT FOR PARADE, WE SHOULD KNOW NOW AND GET ON WITH APPLYING OUR EFFORTS TO THE LONGER TERM.

--WE NEED TO WORK OUT WITH THE SAUDIS THE BEST TACTICS FOR CONVEYING ABOVE TO YAR LEADERSHIP. OUR OWN PRESENT THINKING IS THAT SAG SHOULD TAKE THE LEAD IN DOING THIS. USG IS PREPARED TO RESPOND TO DIRECT YAR QUERIES AND IS PREPARED, AS SAUDIS PREFER, TO SHARE WITH SAG THE TASK OF TRYING TO BRING YAR LEADERSHIP TO MORE REALISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT USG AND SAG ARE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH IN SUPPORT OF NORTH YEMEN.

3. FOR SANA: ABOVE PROVIDED FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND COMMENT. UNTIL WE HAVE HAD REPORT ON SULTAN'S REACTION TO ABOVE WE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD AVOID RAISING THIS QUESTION WITH YARG AND SHOULD RESPOND TO QUERIES BY SAYING THAT USG IS CAREFULLY CONSIDERING YAR'S REACTION TO OUR PROPOSALS AND IS IN CONSULTATION WITH SAG ON WHERE WE GO FROM HERE.

4. INFORMATION JIDDA 5960 MAKES IT MORE URGENT THAT AMBASSADOR MEET WITH SULTAN AND OTHER APPROPRIATE SAG
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OFFICIALS TO TALK ALONG LINES OUTLINED ABOVE WITH OBJECTIVE OF TRYING TO KEEP SAUDI POSITION FROM HARDENING ON UNREALISTIC REQUEST BY VIRTUE OF PLANNED LETTER FROM KING TO PRESIDENT. CHRISTOPHER

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

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